

Robert Service Memorial Park

Location: Cowichan Bay/Bench Road Intersection, Cowichan Bay, BC

Formally Recognized: 2015/07/08

Other Names: Not applicable

Construction Dates: 1958; 1959; 1960



Front View of Park from Cowichan Bay Road

Statement of Significance for Robert Service Memorial Park

Description of Historic Place

The Robert Service Memorial Park is a small nature park with one stone cairn and two stone benches. The stone cairn is centrally located, with the benches on either side, all facing Cowichan Bay. This park is located on the west side of Cowichan Bay Road, at the intersection on Cowichan Bay Road and Bench Road, in Cowichan Bay, British Columbia. The historic site is limited to the stone cairn and two stone benches.

Heritage Value

Robert Service Memorial Park has significant heritage value in its association with the Native Sons of B.C.'s local Prevost Post, a group who protected many important local sites. There is also great value in the park's representation of the historic settlement patterns that created the Cowichan Valley. This park also recognizes the first European families to settle in the valley, which is of great value to the community.

The stone cairn was erected in 1958 in dedication to the pioneers that arrived on the *H.M.S. Hecate* in 1862. The following year, a stone bench was built in memoriam of Robert Service, the infamous Bard of the Yukon. In 1960,

the second stone bench was built in recognition of early pioneer women in the Cowichan Valley. This memorial park was created by the Prevost Post of the Native Sons of B.C., whose goal was to recognize the early European settlers who created the communities within the Cowichan Valley.

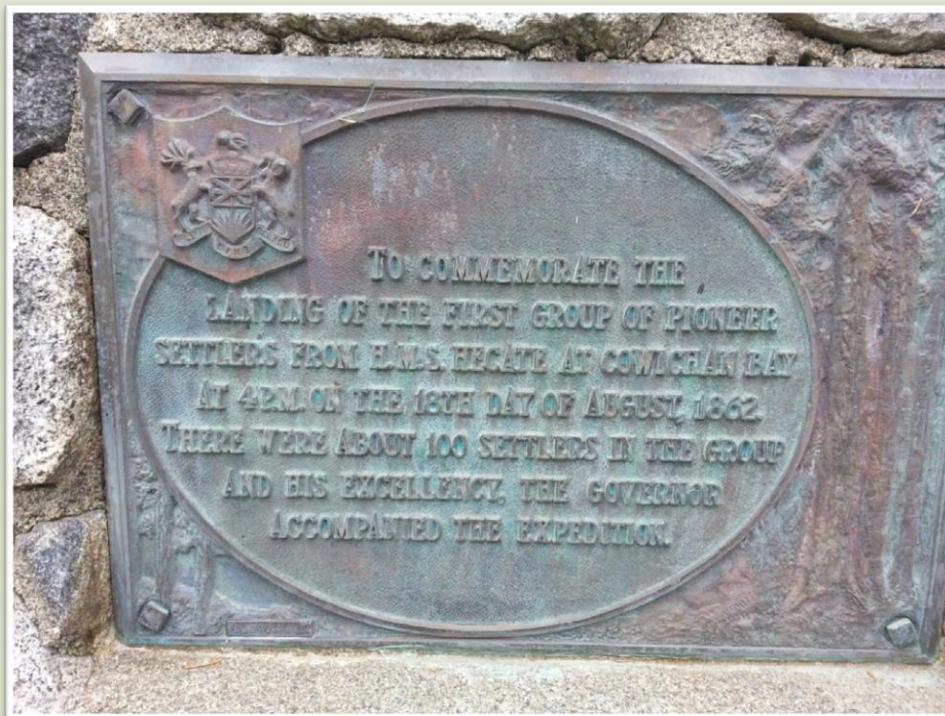
There is significant cultural value represented by the Robert Service Memorial Park, as it recognizes the early families responsible for the development of the Cowichan Valley. This historic memorial is meaningful to many local families as it observes the origin of European settlement in the Cowichan Valley.

The Native Sons of B.C. have played a significant role in B.C.'s history, and the association between the Robert Service Memorial Park and the Cowichan Valley's own local Native Sons has undeniable heritage value. The stone cairn is reported to be the first monument erected by the Prevost Post of the Native Sons of B.C., and thus represents what communities members felt to be the most important aspect of their history.

Character-Defining Elements

Key elements that define the heritage character of the Robert Service Memorial Park include:

- The stone cairn and stone benches' position in their original location
- All historic materials dating to time of construction, such as the original plaques and stone pieces
- Continued public park use
- The unobstructed view of the memorials from Cowichan Bay Road



Stone Cairn Plaque (1958)

Historical Information

Timeline

- 1958. Native Sons of B.C. erect Stone Cairn dedicated to *H.M.S. Hecate* settlers.
- 1959. Native Sons of B.C. erect stone bench dedicated to Robert Service, Bard of the Yukon.
- 1960. Native Sons of B.C. erect stone bench dedicated to early pioneer women of the Cowichan Valley.

Important Facts

- The Prevost Post No. 10 of the Native Sons of B.C. was the group responsible for the memorial structures.
- The H.M.S. Hecate arrived in Cowichan Bay in 1862 with approximately 100 settlers aboard, all of whom played a significant role in the development of the Cowichan Valley.
- Robert Service was an internationally famous poet who was first published in the Cowichan Valley while living in the Cowichan Bay area for a short time.



Signature of the Prevost Post No. 10 of the Native Sons of B.C.



Side View of the Robert Service Memorial Park from Cowichan Bay Road

Current Information

Function

- The Robert Service Memorial Park is owned and managed by the CVRD as a Community Park.
- For more information visit: www.cvr.bc.ca/parks under Community Parks.

Construction

- No recent construction.

Heritage Status

- Pending Provincial Recognition.